SITREP.05.02

SITUATION REPORT ON EMERGENCY TRANSBOUNDARY OUTBREAK PESTS (ETOPS) FOR JUNE WITH A FORECAST TILL MID-AUGUST, 2002

SUMMARY

1. Summary: This report provides an update about recent activities on emergency transboundary outbreak pests (ETOPs) in Africa, the Middle-East, Central and Southwest Asia, as well as Latin America. The report covers May with a forecast till mid-July, 2002. It addresses the major migratory pests, including desert, Italian, migratory, red, Moroccan, and Madagascar migratory locusts, armyworm and red-billed quelea birds. A brief overview of the current status of each of these pests is provided in the remainder of this summary and detailed accounts are provided thereafter.

2. Desert locust, *Schistocerca gregaria* (Forskal). The desert locust situation remained calm in May in the outbreak areas. Very few adults were reported in northwestern Mauritania and Pakistan. Conditions have improved in eastern Ethiopia and northwestern Somalia, where good rains fell in May, however, significant locust activities are not expected during the forecast period.

3. No locusts were reported in the central region during May. Unusually heavy rains fell in southern Oman and caused flooding in some places. Conditions remained fairly dry and calm in other parts of the region.

4. A few individual locusts were seen in the spring breeding areas in western Pakistan, but the rest of the summer breeding areas in the region remained calm. Significant locust developments are not likely during the forecast period.

5. Red locust, *Nomadacris septemfasciata* (Surville). Several red locust Nomadacris septemfasciata Serville concentrations and swarms were sighted, during aerial surveys, in the Iku-Katavi, the Wembere and the Malagarasi outbreak areas in Tanzania. Plans for control operations are in progress. Two small swarms escaped from the Iku-Katavi outbreak area on May 26th 2002 and were observed flying over Mpembe village in a northwesterly direction toward Lake Tanganyika. The red locust situation in the other outbreak areas in Tanzania and Zambia remained relatively calm.

The seasonal burning of vegetation in the outbreak areas that normally takes place between June and September is likely to concentrate the locusts further into dense swarms. Some of the swarms if not controlled, may migrate out of the Iku-Katavi and Malagarasi outbreak areas in a northwesterly direction towards Burundi, Rwanda, Congo and Uganda. The current prevailing wind is southeasterly and thus the northwesterly migration of the locusts. However, in September/October, the prevailing winds will change into northeasterly. With this change, locust swarms (if still around) could migrate in a southeasterly direction. Thus, the locust swarms could invade Zambia and other countries lying to the South East of Tanzania.

Past experience has shown that years of drought are normally followed by serious migratory pest outbreaks. The most recent example is the drought of

1992 to1993 that affected most of the IRLCO-CSA countries. The drought was followed in 1995 and 1996 by serious locust upsurges in Lake Chilwa plains, Malawi, Buzi Gorongosa plains in Mozambique and Malagarasi and Iku/Katavi outbreak areas in Tanzania. Some of locust swarms in 1996 escaped from Buzi Gorongosa and invaded Malawi, Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa. The International Red Locust Control Organization for Central and Southern Africa (IRLCO-CSA) had to carry out extensive locust control campaigns in all the outbreak areas mentioned above. The Brown Locust, African Migratory Locust and Red Locust outbreaks of 1986 to 1990 that affected Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe were also preceded by drought that affected central and southern Africa in the early 1980's. Thus, with the current drought affecting Zambia, Malawi, Swaziland, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, there is a high probability of locust upsurges in the red locust outbreak areas. This would include the Kafue Flats outbreak area located in southern Zambia.

6. Madagascar migratory locust, *Locusta migratoria capito* (L.). No reports were received on the Malagasy migratory locust in a few months. Given the on going political situation in the country, survey and monitoring activities may not have been carried out as desired and it is likely that some breeding activities may have already occurred in a few traditional breeding places, including the Horombe plateau. It is advisable that any NGO staff or others who may have access to the breeding areas, if possible, conduct surveys and monitoring to minimize the chance of any potential future outbreaks.

7. Other locusts and grasshoppers. Moroccan or Mediterranean locust, *Dociostaurus marocccanus* continued to pose threats in the Central Asian countries including Afghanistan and Tajikistan, where outbreaks have been seen and controlled on hundreds of ha of pasture and crop fields. Previous reports indicated that the multi-donor supported project that is being lead by the UN/FAO is well underway in Afghanistan. Locust operations were also reported in Tajikistan. Details on these operations are being awaited. Vigilant surveillance and monitoring are recommended to avoid any potential damage to crops and pasture.

8. Armyworm, *Spodoptera exempta* (Walker). There were no reports of armyworm outbreaks from any of the IRLCO/CSA member countries and the region is expected to remain free of armyworm during the forecast period. No information was received on armyworm from the DLCO/EA member countries at the time this report was compiled.

9. Red-billed quelea, *Quelea quelea* (L.). Quelea birds were reported causing damage to paddy rice in the Morogoro and Mbeya regions and to wheat in the Arusha region of Tanzania. Control operations by the National Plant Protection, Tanzania, in collaboration with the Desert Locust Control Organization for Eastern Africa (DLCO-EA), were still in progress at the time of compiling this report. Quelea are likely to be a problem to small grain cereal growers in the Rift Valley Province of Kenya and Mbeya and Arusha regions of Tanzania. Vigilant survey and control operations are recommended. END OF SUMMARY

ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION: WEATHER AND ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

10. Most of Sahelian west Africa remained dry in May. Very light rains fell in a few places in Mauritania where conditions were also slightly favorable for survival but not breeding. In Mali, rain fell on May 17 and

28 in Nara and Gao, respectively. Other countries in the region remained fairly hot and dry.

11. Light to moderate rains fell across the southern parts of the Atlas in Morocco. The southern part was hot temperature reaching 41 degree Celsius. Isolated light rains fell in southern Algeria, but the temperature remained around 40 degree Celsius. Other countries in the region remained hot and dry.

12. Dry conditions persisted in most of eastern Africa. Good rains (up to 70 mm) fell during the first three weeks of May in parts of eastern Ethiopia. Light rains also fell in northwestern Somalia. Light rains also fell in Kassala, Sudan. Breeding conditions are favorable in eastern Ethiopia and northwestern Somalia. Conditions are expected to improve in Northern Kordofan and Kassala, Sudan. Elsewhere in the region, conditions will remain dry during the forecast period.

13. Good rains fell over the southern Arabian Peninsula in May. Moderate to heavy rains also fell in southern Oman and light to heavy rains also fell in northern Oman along the Batina coast. Dry and unfavorable conditions were reported in other parts of the region.

14. Light showers were reported at Panigur in Baluchistan, western Pakistan in mid May. The monsoon wind from the Horn of Africa has been formed over the Arabian Sea as of mid May. More rains are expected to fall in this region during the forecast period. Dry conditions prevailed elsewhere in the region.

15. The rains generally came to an end in all countries which harbor red locust outbreak areas. Thus, breeding conditions in the red locust outbreak areas remained generally dry in May. However, isolated showers occurred in some of the outbreak areas. Temperatures dropped in mid May, signaling the beginning of the dry and cold season in central and southern Africa.

DESERT LOCUST ACTIVITY

16. Western and northwestern Africa. Very few adult locusts were reported during the first half of May in Mauritania. Late reports indicate that some adult desert locusts mixed with tree locusts (*Anacridium sp.*) and perhaps, small swarms were seen in the Adrar des Iforas in March and April, but no locusts were reported from other countries in the region.

17. Forecast: A few adult locusts are expected to persist in parts of Inchir, southern Adrar and in the summer breeding areas of Tagant, Trarza and northern Brakna, Mauritania. Isolated adults may also appear and persist in the Timetrine and the Adrar des Iforas, Mali, Tamesna, Niger and may begin breeding with the onset of the summer rains. Other countries in the regions will remain calm during the forecast period.

18. Eastern and northeastern Africa, and the Near East: No locusts were reported in these regions in May.

19. Forecast: A few isolated adults may appear and persist in the Red Sea coastal plains of Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and Oman, but significant development is not likely during the forecast period. No locust activities are expected in other countries, including Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Kuwait, UAR, Bahrain, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Qatar, Syria, and

Turkey. Routine monitoring remains essential to avert any undetected locust upsurges.

20. Eastern region. Isolated immature and mature adults at very low densities (1-3 insects/ha) were sighted in the interior of Baluchistan, Pakistan during the survey carried out in April. No locusts were seen elsewhere in the region. In May a few individual adults were seen at five locations in Baluchistan.

21. Locusts continued to pose threats in the Central Asian countries including Afghanistan and Tajikistan, where outbreaks have been seen and controlled on hundreds of ha of pasture and crop fields. Previous reports indicated that the multi-donor supported project that is being lead by the UN/FAO is well underway in Afghanistan. Locust operations were also reported in Tajikistan. Details on these operations are being awaited.

22. Forecast: It is likely that in Afghanistan and Tajikistan, the locusts have moved or will move into crop fields and could cause substantial damage if left addressed. Locust numbers will decline in Baluchistan. Pakistan and significant locust activities are not expected during the forecast period in these regions. Locust numbers could increase in Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Survey, monitoring, and control operations are required to avert any serious damage.

23. LAC regions. Locust outbreaks that were reported in Peru in April into May have come to an end. Control operations are concluded. Detail reports are being awaited.

24. Forecast. It is likely that some locust activities could continue during the forecast period, but the level of severity cannot be estimated at this time.

OTHER LOCUST ACTIVITY

25. Red locust, *N. septemfasciata* (Surville). Several red locust Nomadacris septemfasciata Serville concentrations and swarms were sighted, during aerial surveys, in the Iku-Katavi, the Wembere and the Malagarasi outbreak areas in Tanzania. Plans for control operations are in progress. Two small swarms were reported to have escaped from the Iku-Katavi outbreak area on May 26th 2002. The swarms were observed flying toward Lake Tanganyika. The fate of the swarms is yet to be ascertained. The red locust situation in the other outbreak areas (Lake Chilwa plains in Malawi, Buzi Gorongosa in Mozambique, the Rukwa Valley in Tanzania, Kafue Flats and Mweru wa Ntipa in Zambia) remained relatively calm. The seasonal burning of vegetation in the outbreak areas that normally takes place between June and September is likely to concentrate the locusts further into dense swarms. Some of the swarms if not controlled, may migrate out of the Iku-Katavi and Malagarasi outbreak areas in a northwesterly direction towards Burundi, Rwanda, Congo and Uganda. The current prevailing wind is southeasterly and thus the northwesterly migration of the locusts. However, in September/October, the prevailing winds will change into northeasterly. With this change, locust swarms (if still around) could migrate in a southeasterly direction. Thus, the locust swarms could invade Zambia and other countries lying to the South East of Tanzania. Past experience has shown that years of drought are normally followed by serious migratory pest outbreaks. The most recent example is the drought of 1992 to1993 that affected most of the IRLCO-CSA countries. The drought was followed in 1995

and 1996 by serious locust upsurges in Lake Chilwa plains, Malawi, Buzi Gorongosa plains in Mozambique and Malagarasi and Iku/Katavi outbreak areas in Tanzania. Some of locust swarms in 1996 escaped from Buzi Gorongosa and invaded Malawi, Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa. The International Red Locust Control Organization for Central and Southern Africa (IRLCO-CSA) had to carry out extensive locust control campaigns in all the outbreak areas mentioned above. The Brown Locust, African Migratory Locust and Red Locust outbreaks of 1986 to 1990 that affected Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe were also preceded by drought that affected central and southern Africa in the early 1980=s. Thus, with the current drought affecting Zambia, Malawi, Swaziland, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, there is a high probability of locust upsurges in the red locust outbreak areas. This would include the Kafue Flats outbreak area located in southern Zambia.

26. Forecast: Grass burning in the red locust outbreak areas is likely to begin in late June and force adult locusts to concentrate in a few areas in Iku-Katavi and Malagarasi outbreak areas and could possibly form small swarms unless control is carried out between now and end of June. The locust situation in the other outbreak areas will likely remain calm.

27. Madagascar migratory Locust, *L.migratoria capito* (L.). As a result of the ongoing political unrest in the country, no reports were received on the Malagasy migratory locust in a few months. Under the current conditions, it may be quite difficult to carry out survey and monitoring activities and it is likely that some breeding activities may have already occurred in a few outbreak areas, including the Horombe plateau.

28. Forecast: It is likely that some locust activities that have occurred in a few places, including the Horombe plateau and could continue to further develop. It is advisable that any NGOs or others with access to the outbreak/breeding areas, conduct surveys and monitoring if and whenever possible to avert any potential outbreaks.

ARMYWORM ACTIVITY

29. Armyworm, *S. exempta* (Walker). Locust activities were not reported in the IRLOC/CSA member countries. No reports were received from the DLCO/EA at the time this report was compiled. Details on the situation are being awaited.

30. Forecast: The IRLCO/CSA region is expected to remain free of armyworm during the forecast period. Armyworm activities are likely to occur in Kenya. Moth numbers are likely to be on the rise in some places in Ethiopia, where some low level activities may be seen in the coming months.

QUELEA BIRD ACTIVITY

31. Red-billed quelea, *Q. quelea* (L.). Quelea birds continued being a problem to small grain cereal growers in Shinyanga, Singida, Dodoma, Iringa, Arusha and Mwanza regions of Tanzania. Crops attacked included, rice, sorghum and millet. Control operations were carried out against quelea birds on more than 327 ha in Shinyanga Region, Tanzania by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security in collaboration with the

DLCO-EA.

32. Forecast: Quelea and other grain eating birds are likely to continue being a problem to small grain cereal growers in Tanzania. Quelea breeding might commence in late May and early June in the traditional breeding areas of Kenya if the weather conditions are favorable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

33. Although the current locust and other migratory pest populations, by and large, did not call for significant control actions, some intensive control operations were carried out against different pests in a number of countries. It should be noted that, if left unattended, there is a likelihood for the pest populations to gradually increase in the coming months to a level that could pose serious threats to crops and pasture. Therefore, it is crucial that regular surveillance and monitoring are maintained and that reports are communicated promptly to the appropriate bodies within the national and/or regional systems.

ACTION REQUESTED AND CONTACT INFORMATION

34. The Africa Emergency Locust and Grasshopper Assistance (AELGA) project is administered by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), bureau for Africa (AFR), Office of Sustainable Development (SD), crisis mitigation and recovery division (CMR). AELGA works closely with the United Nations: Food and Agriculture Organization (UN/FAO), DLCO/EA, IRLOC/CSA, USAID bilateral and regional missions, research establishments, and host country ministries to provide continuous monitoring and analysis of crop protection risks associated with ETOPs that have a potential for causing large-scale outbreak emergencies. The purpose of this effort is to acquire data and information on ETOPs to prepare regular updates and disseminated to all interested stakeholders. Unsolicited reports or information about ETOPs situations and activities in your region or country are welcome and appreciated.

35. Missions with programs on food security, emergency pests and other related activities, host countries and regional organizations with a similar portfolio, as well as other stakeholders are kindly requested to forward your reports by the last day of each month. Please, forward reports, information, questions, and/or requests to Dr. Yene T. Belayneh, ybelayneh@afr-sd.org FAX: 202-219-0506 with a cc to Drs. Joe Vorgetts, jvorgetts@afr-sd.org, and Harry Bottenberg, hbottenberg@afr-sd.org

For more information on the weather conditions, please, visit the following web sites:
http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/economic/giews/english/esahel/sahtoc.html
http://www.fews.net

For more information on the desert locust situation, you may visit:
http://www.fao.org/news/global/locusts/locuhome.htm
http://www.english/newsroom/news/2002/5000-en.htm/
http://www.icosamp.ecoport.org

u:\ybelayney\Sitreps\sitrep.05.02.wpd